(c) The following financial benefits are expected to accrue from implementing Electronic Toll Collection Systems:

(i) Better Revenue collection

(ii) Improvement in transparency of financial transactions

(iii) Better user convenience with facility for non-stop payment and time savings

(iv) Reduction in vehicular emission and environmental improvement

(v) Reduction in toll plaza operating costs

(vi) Enhancement in audit control on fee collection by centralizing user accounts

Punjabi news unit, Jalandhar

*490. DR. M.S. GILL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that since 1966, Punjab does not have fully staffed and empowered Punjabi News Unit at Jalandhar and poor quality Punjabi News are fed to Jalandhar from Chandigarh UT and Delhi; and

(b) is this the policy for all States of the country?

THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) (i) As far as AIR is concerned, there is no Regional News Unit (RNU) at Jalandhar and, therefore, there is no question of understaffing. In any case, quality of Punjabi News fed to AIR, Jalandhar is of good quality.

(ii) Doordarshan has a Jalandhar News Unit, which is adequately staffed. Quality of Punjabi News from Jalandhar is of good quality.

(b) AIR and Doordarshan Stations, which do not have RNUs, broadcast the news produced by the other RNUs in the State.

Stand on Nepal's political development

*491. DR. NARAYAN SINGH MANAKLAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have failed to present the nation's cohesive stand on Nepal's recent political development;

(b) if not, the details of India's position thereon;

(c) to what extent the democratic experiment in Nepal would be sustainable given the growing influence of Maoists in Nepal's political scenario;

(d) whether resurgence of Nepal's Maoist forces is a threat to India's internal security in terms of further strengthening of Maoism and Naxalism in the country; and

(e) if so, the details of measures taken/proposed to be taken to counter the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (e) Government has maintained a consistent policy towards Nepal. It has all along been of the view that the challenges facing Nepal can only be addressed through a genuine process of dialogue and reconciliation between the constitutional forces of Nepal based on the principle of multi-party democracy.

A lasting solution to the challenges facing Nepal has to be found by the people of Nepal themselves through a peaceful political process. There can be no purely military solution to the problems facing Nepal. The Maoist movement must abandon the path of violence and accept the principles of multi-party democracy thereby creating conditions for joining the political mainstream.

Government is aware of he threats to India's security posed by the Maoist insurgency in Nepal. All necessary measures are being taken to safeguard India's national security interests.

Regional passport offices in Uttar Pradesh

*492. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is an acute shortage of proper staff at the regional passport offices in the States, particularly Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that due to the staff shortage the 'Haj Pilgrims' in U.P. have to face a lot of difficulties;

(c) whether Central Government are taking action for providing proper staff strength at the passport offices in Uttar Pradesh to enable all the persons seeking passports to get them well in time; and

(d) if so, when and if not, the reasons therefor?